

Alabama Department of Senior Services

2005 Needs Assessment

Final Report – Statewide

December 23, 2005

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## **Preface**

The Alabama Department of Senior Services (ADSS) appreciates the cooperation it received for this project. The Area Agencies on Aging distributed the survey to their staff, center managers, and walk-ins. The Alabama State Employees Association and the Retirement Systems of Alabama publicized our needs assessment in their newsletters and informed their readers ADSS' web site was available for convenient on-line completion of the survey. We were very impressed with the number of completed surveys we received and obtained a better indication of Alabamians' service needs. We will further analyze this information when we prepare our Fiscal Year 2007-2010 State Plan on Aging. We will encourage each Area Agency on Aging to analyze their region-specific report when they prepare their Fiscal Year 2007-2010 Area Plan on Aging. Thank you for your participation and cooperation in this important effort. We could not have done it without you.

## **2005 Needs Assessment**

### **I. Purpose and Overview**

From January 20 to April 30, 2005, the Alabama Department of Senior Services (ADSS) surveyed the general public to determine which social and health services issues were most important to them. The survey was designed to be as comprehensive as possible, especially to obtain input for the development of our Fiscal Year 2007-2010 State Plan on Aging and for each Area Agency on Aging's (AAA) Area Plan on Aging. We distributed the survey to the 13 AAAs, requested each AAA to return the completed surveys to our office, and received more surveys than originally anticipated. ADSS also posted the survey on our web site for convenient on-line completion. We also contacted other state organizations in hopes of publicizing the survey in their newsletters.

Survey questions addressed home- and community-based service preferences, service access, use of existing services, and demographics of the respondents. The survey items covered a wide variety of service needs and preferences. A total of 3,238 respondents fully or partially completed the survey; 3 percent of them completed the survey on ADSS' web site.

### **II. Study Design**

To obtain as much information as possible regarding the respondents' current and anticipated (i.e., within the next five years) service needs, ADSS staff developed a 4-page survey that was intended to be simple to complete and easy to return to our office. The survey contained both open- and closed-ended questions. Each AAA received a set of surveys and was asked to obtain 10 completed surveys per senior center and 5 surveys per county from their homebound clients. We asked each AAA to provide a large, brown envelope to the center managers in order to confidentially hold the completed surveys and to forward the following instructions to the

center managers: a) ensure each respondent did not write his/her name on the survey in order to maintain anonymity; b) provide basic assistance in reading the survey if a respondent needed help in understanding the questions and do their best to ensure the survey responses were indeed the respondent's answers; and c) ensure the respondents placed their completed surveys in the large envelope. After the surveys were completed, the center managers sent the large envelopes to the AAA office; the AAAs either mailed or hand-carried the surveys to ADSS.

We placed a copy of the survey on our web site, providing an opportunity for the general public to complete the survey via the Internet. The Alabama State Employees Association and the Retirement Systems of Alabama publicized the needs assessment in their member newsletters and identified ADSS' web address where on-line completion of the survey was possible. ADSS also mailed blank copies of the survey to the general public when they contacted us directly. The following table identifies the source of the 3,238 completed surveys:

**Table 1**  
**Input Source of Completed Surveys**

<b>Input Source</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
NACOLG	410	12.7
WARC	323	10.0
M4A	214	6.6
EARPDC	78	2.4
SCADC	248	7.7
ATRC	199	6.1
SARCOA	290	9.0
SARPC	262	8.1
CAAC	201	6.2
LRCOG	98	3.0
NARCOG	277	8.6
TARCOG	309	9.5
OSCS	42	1.3
ADSS website	95	2.9
Walk-ins	192	5.9
<b>Total:</b>	<b>3,238</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The surveys contained simple instructions for completion, and the respondents were asked to return completed surveys to ADSS by April 29, 2005. The completed surveys underwent an extensive “data scrubbing” effort, and responses were checked for completeness and coded for data entry. We used SPSS statistical analysis software to analyze the data and to produce the charts included in this report. ADSS distributed a set of statewide and region-specific reports to the AAAs and posted the statewide report on our web site.

To highlight a few survey topics, question #1 was related to service preferences and included items regarding service availability, service costs, and client assistance needs to maintain independent living. This question asked the respondents to identify those services that are “very important”, “somewhat important”, or “not very important” to them at this time or could be concerns to them within the next five years. Respondents were also provided an opportunity to identify additional service concerns.

Question #2 was related to service access. We asked the respondents to identify all methods they currently use to determine the availability of programs and services for older adults in their area. Awareness and knowledge of home- and community-based services affect both service utilization and program development. Beyond one’s awareness of local services, knowledge of services refers to the availability of accurate information concerning program characteristics, such as location, hours of operation, eligibility criteria, and costs.

### **III. Analysis and Interpretation**

To begin the data analysis, we examined each survey item individually. Because some respondents did not answer every survey question, tables in this report identify the number of missing responses, if applicable. We conducted additional analyses of certain items, comparing

them to the respondents' age, gender, race, and monthly household income. Many of these analysis results are included in this report. The Appendix contains a copy of the original survey.

#### **A. Single-Item Analysis.**

For each survey, if the respondent provided the name of his/her county, we determined the name of the corresponding AAA. The Appendix contains a listing of the 13 AAAs and the counties they represent. The table below identifies the number of responses per region:

**Table 2**  
**Number of Respondents per Region**

<b>Region (AAA)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
NACOLG	406	13.1
WARC	313	10.1
M4A	217	7.0
EARPDC	129	4.2
SCADC	257	8.3
ATRC	200	6.5
SARCOA	293	9.5
SARPC	269	8.7
CAAC	238	7.7
LRCOG	101	3.3
NARCOG	272	8.8
TARCOG	330	10.7
OSCS	71	2.3
<b>Subtotal:</b>	3,096	100.0
Unknown Location	142	
<b>Total:</b>	3,238	

We were fortunate to obtain data from respondents in 66 of Alabama's 67 counties; Table 3 contains the number of responses per county.

**Table 3**  
**Number of Respondents per County**

<u>Name of County</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Name of County</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
Autauga	56	Lee	53
Baldwin	59	Limestone	62
Barbour	33	Lowndes	25
Bibb	45	Macon	75
Blount	41	Madison	68
Bullock	27	Marengo	24
Butler	29	Marion	63
Calhoun	13	Marshall	93
Chambers	6	Mobile	144
Cherokee	3	Monroe	22
Chilton	19	Montgomery	132
Choctaw	14	Morgan	114
Clarke	30	Perry	22
Clay	1	Pickens	44
Cleburne	0	Pike	43
Coffee	56	Randolph	1
Colbert	89	Russell	48
Conecuh	13	St. Clair	47
Coosa	1	Shelby	66
Covington	24	Sumter	19
Crenshaw	58	Talladega	90
Cullman	84	Tallapoosa	5
Dale	32	Tuscaloosa	74
Dallas	10	Walker	44
DeKalb	63	Washington	20
Elmore	50	Wilcox	26
Escambia	66	Winston	24
Etowah	9		
Fayette	52	Missing	142
Franklin	75		
Geneva	34	<b>Total:</b>	<b>3,238</b>
Greene	23		
Hale	32		
Henry	43		
Houston	71		
Jackson	44		
Jefferson	71		
Lamar	43		
Lauderdale	155		
Lawrence	74		

Importance of Services: We wanted to identify those services the respondents considered “very important”, “somewhat important”, or “not very important.” Health care costs, health care availability, and preventing identity theft and other frauds were more frequently deemed as “very important” by the respondents. Table 4 provides a detailed listing of the respondents’ answers, sorted in descending order by the reply “Very Important.”

The respondents’ “top 5” services were as follows:

<u>Service area</u>	<u>Rated as “Very Important”</u>
Cost of medicine	92.8%
Cost of hospital care	88.7%
Availability of hospital care	87.7%
Cost of in-home care	85.5%
Preventing identity theft and other frauds	85.4%

Issues most frequently reported as “not very important” were:

<u>Service area</u>	<u>Rated as “Not Very Important”</u>
Full-time employment for seniors	28.7%
Help with retirement planning	25.2%
Help with completing tax forms	21.6%
Help with financial planning	18.6%
Part-time work for seniors	18.3%

Finding Out About Programs and Services: We wanted to know what methods people use to learn about programs for older adults in their region. The respondents primarily used the following methods to determine program availability: ask a friend (60.1%), read a newspaper (43.3%), watch television (38.2%), ask a relative (37.7%), and visit a church (32.7%). It was not surprising the respondents utilize multiple resources when they look for services for themselves or other family members. Respondents were also provided an opportunity to identify other resources for program and service information; these responses are located in Table 5.

**Table 4**  
**Reported Importance of Services**

Services/Needs	Percents		
	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important
Cost of medicine	92.8	5.3	1.9
Cost of hospital care	88.7	9.1	2.2
Availability of hospital care	87.7	9.4	2.9
Cost of in-home care	85.5	10.7	3.7
Preventing identity theft and other frauds	85.4	11.3	3.2
Cost of food	85.0	11.9	3.1
Cost of nursing home care	84.9	11.2	3.9
Maintaining my personal independence	84.8	11.9	3.2
Maintaining a healthy diet	83.9	12.8	3.3
Availability of in-home care	82.7	13.3	4.0
Information about what services are available	80.2	16.1	3.7
Help with understanding benefits (like Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security)	79.8	15.6	4.7
Availability of transportation	79.5	14.1	6.4
Availability of nursing home care	78.8	15.3	5.9
Cost of transportation	78.7	16.4	4.9
Legislative voice for seniors	78.0	17.1	4.9
Variety of health care choices	78.0	18.6	3.5
Maintaining mental wellness	77.3	18.0	4.7
Free legal assistance for seniors	77.2	17.2	5.6
Community activities for seniors	76.7	17.7	5.6
Help with paying medical bills and/or medications	76.0	15.3	8.7
Availability of physical therapy at home	74.9	18.8	6.4
Health insurance information	74.8	18.6	6.6
Disease prevention information	72.0	19.9	8.0
Availability of mental health care	70.7	21.4	7.9
Availability of adult day care services	66.3	22.1	11.6
Help with taking care of older relatives or friends	66.2	21.3	12.5
Help with filling out medical paperwork	64.8	23.6	11.7
Help with paying bills and/or managing household finances	62.7	23.6	13.7
Help with house/yard work	60.8	27.2	12.0
Help with housework/cleaning	59.8	29.2	11.0
Help with financial planning	52.0	29.4	18.6
Help with completing tax forms	50.2	28.2	21.6
Part-time work for seniors	49.5	32.3	18.3
Help with retirement planning	49.4	25.3	25.2
Full-time employment for seniors	36.4	34.9	28.7

**Table 5**  
**Other Resources for Programs and Services**

<b>Other Program Resources</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No response	2706	83.6
Senior center	322	9.9
Internet, hardcopy materials	58	1.8
Community organizations	51	1.6
Area Agency on Aging	39	1.2
Word of mouth	16	0.5
Area Agency on Aging, senior center	11	0.3
Work	11	0.3
Health care/social workers, home visits	11	0.3
ADSS, ADHR, ADPH	5	0.2
AoA, AARP	4	0.1
Speakers, conferences	2	0.1
Lawyers	2	0.1
<b>Total:</b>	<b>3238</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Ability to Drive: 69 percent of the respondents said they are able to drive when they need or want to. Because many people rely on their ability to drive in order to maintain their independence, they often face huge adjustments when they must relinquish their drivers' licenses. ADSS will explore transportation issues in more depth with future surveys.

Provision of Care to Others: When asked if they regularly provide care for someone who is unable to take care of him/herself, the majority (71 percent) of the respondents stated they do not. It would be interesting to determine how much time caregivers devote to both formal and informal caregiving responsibilities as well as the age, gender, and relationship of the caregivers and care recipients.

Items that were Delayed or Done Without: We asked whether the respondents have had to delay or do without any of the following items during the past 12 months: prescription medications, hearing aids, dental care, or new eyeglasses or eye care. For people with limited incomes who struggle to make ends meet, some items become luxuries. The following table summarizes their responses:

**Table 6**  
**Things Delayed or Done Without**

<b>Items Delayed/Done Without</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Prescription medications	560	19.6
Hearing aid	261	10.2
Dental care	622	22.8
New eyeglasses or eye care	609	21.9

Although they were given an opportunity to identify other things they have delayed or done without, very few respondents identified additional issues. Some of these issues were: doctor appointments, house cleaning/repairs, yard work, personal care, transportation, food, surgeries, heat, relocation, food stamps, and medical bill payments.

Volunteer Work and Employment Status: 42 percent of the respondents indicated they would be interested in volunteering to help senior citizens in their community. Perhaps because over 70 percent of them were age 70+, most of the respondents (79 percent) were not currently working. For those who were employed, 6 percent of the respondents worked full-time, 15 percent part-time.

Problems with their Home: The respondents were asked to identify the types of problems they were having with their homes. Nearly 65 percent of them need help with major repairs. Table 7 summarizes their replies.

**Table 7**  
**Problems with Respondents' Homes**

<b>Problem with Home</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Major repairs are needed	772	64.3
Pests (roaches, rats, etc.)	355	29.6
It is no longer affordable (utilities, upkeep, rent too expensive, etc.)	324	27.0
My house is too large for my needs	262	21.8
My house has stairs that are difficult for me to use	156	13.0
Flooding or other similar environmental problems	129	10.7
Landlord does not respond to my needs	90	7.5

The respondents were also provided an opportunity to identify other problems they are experiencing with their homes. Although we received few responses, they are shown below:

**Table 8**  
**Other Problems with Respondents' Homes**

<b>Other Problem with Home</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Minor repairs/modifications	34
Yard work, outside maintenance	26
Storm damage repairs/cleanup	8
General maintenance, painting	7
Roof repair/replacement	7
Housekeeping	4
Plumbing repair/replacement	4
Relocation needed	4
Neighborhood crime, noisy dogs	4
Basement/stairs are damp/leaking	4
Road/parking lot needs repair/construction	2
High insurance costs	1
Laundry room too far away	1

Prescription Assistance: Considering the recent changes to the Medicare program, we asked the respondents about the federal assistance they have received to help pay for their prescription drug costs. 37 percent of the respondents have received a Medicare-approved prescription drug discount card; only 25 percent of them said they qualified for the \$600 credit.

Participation in Local Activities: Because it is highly probable most of the respondents were current senior center participants, it is not surprising over 80 percent of them have visited a local senior center. While some people may be unaware of the value and/or existence of support groups in their community, 42 percent of the respondents indicated they would like to participate in a local support group.

Knowledge of ADSS and the AAAs: Half of the respondents stated they were familiar with ADSS. Over 57 percent of them indicated they were familiar with their local AAA. ADSS and the AAAs continually develop new ways to advertise their programs and services and want to know how effective their efforts have been.

Other Topics to be Considered: The respondents were given the opportunity to identify additional issues they would like ADSS to consider and/or to be aware of. Table 9 contains their responses.

**Table 9**  
**Other Issues to Consider**

<b>Issue to Consider</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
More transportation options for seniors and disabled adults	49
High costs (medical, food, prescriptions, rent, utilities)	25
More senior services' grants/programs	19
Better information on available services	13
More senior exercise programs	11
Financial/legal assistance	11
Need senior center modification/construction	11
More home care options, less visitors	9
Save Social Security and Medicare	8
More senior housing options/assistance	8
Explanation of program eligibility criteria	6
Part- or full-time senior employment options	5
More caregiver services	5
More information about ADSS and AAAs	5
Improve quality of senior center meals	5
Concerned about senior center policies, recent AAA changes	4
More senior center activities	3
Awareness of baby boomers coming of age	1
Safety and fraud issues against seniors	1

Age and Gender: The final set of questions was intended to provide demographic details about the respondents. 72 percent of the respondents were age 70 or older; 75 percent of them were women.

Table 10 contains the number of respondents by age range; Table 11 identifies their gender.

**Table 10**  
**Respondents' Ages**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Under 60	163	5.4
60 – 69	697	22.9
70 – 79	1223	40.2
80 – 89	826	27.1
90 or older	137	4.5
<b>Subtotal:</b>	3046	100.0
Missing	192	
<b>Total:</b>	3238	

**Table 11**  
**Respondents' Gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	768	24.9
Female	2312	75.1
<b>Subtotal:</b>	3080	100.0
Missing	158	
<b>Total:</b>	3238	

Race and Ethnic Background: We asked the respondents to identify their race and ethnic background. Because few respondents identified their race was Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, we combined these responses with the racial category “Other.” Table 12 contains the respondents’ race. 41 respondents (2.2 percent) stated their ethnic background was “Hispanic.”

**Table 12**  
**Respondents' Race**

<b>Race</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
African American/Black	855	26.4
Caucasian/White	1925	59.5
Native American	285	8.8
Other	24	0.7
<b>Subtotal:</b>	3089	100.0
Missing	149	
<b>Total:</b>	3238	

Current Living Situation and Proximity to Nearest Relative: The respondents were asked to describe their current living situation regarding their relationship to the people with whom they live. They were permitted to provide more than one response to this question (e.g., live with spouse and child). Then, they were asked to identify how far they live from their nearest relative who does not live with them. Fortunately, 73 percent of the respondents live within 30 minutes of their nearest relative. Table 13 contains the respondents' current living situations; Table 14 identifies the proximity to their nearest relative.

**Table 13**  
**Respondents' Current Living Situations**

<b>Current Living Situation</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Live alone	1738	56.2
Live with spouse	965	31.2
Live with child	269	8.7
Live with grandchild or other relative	161	5.2
Live with friend	32	1.0
<b>Total:</b>	3165	

**Table 14**  
**Respondents' Proximity to Nearest Relative**

<b>Proximity to Nearest Relative</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Within 30 minutes	2221	73.0
More than 30 minutes, but less than 1 hour	291	9.6
1 or 2 hours away	167	5.5
More than 2 hours away	87	2.9
Out of state	161	5.3
Relatives live with me	77	2.5
Not applicable/Don't know	39	1.3
<b>Subtotal:</b>	3043	100.0
Missing	195	
<b>Total:</b>	3238	

Monthly Household Income: The respondents were then asked to identify their monthly household income. Although we assured them that their responses would be held in the strictest confidence, 30 percent of the respondents unfortunately left this question blank. 52 percent of the respondents indicated their monthly household incomes were less than \$1,164. The table below contains the respondents' monthly household income information:

**Table 15**  
**Respondents' Monthly Household Income**

<b>Monthly Household Income</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Less than \$776	802	24.8
\$776 - \$1,163	684	21.1
\$1,164 - \$1,551	311	9.6
More than \$1,551	475	14.7
Don't know/Refuse to answer	966	29.8
<b>Total:</b>	3238	100.0

Voted in last election: To determine their voting behavior, we asked the respondents if they voted in the last election. Considering most of the respondents were age 60 or older, it is not surprising 82 percent of them voted in the last presidential election.

## **B. Two-Item Analysis.**

By comparing some of the demographic information (e.g., age, gender, race, and income) to selected survey items, we wanted to see if some interesting observations could be made. Because only 163 respondents were under age 60, we chose to focus our in-depth analysis to those respondents who were age 60+. The remainder of this section highlights some of the more interesting findings we uncovered.

Age by Gender, Race, and Household Income: To better describe the respondents, we wanted to compare their ages to their gender, race, and monthly household income. 95 percent of the respondents were age 60 or older. 60 percent of them were White and 26 percent were African American/Black. 53 percent of the respondents had a monthly household income less than \$1,164. Tables 16 through 18 contain this information.

Current Living Situation by Age and Gender: It is interesting to note that 40 percent of respondents age 60-69 reported they live alone. At age 70, this rate increased to over 55 percent. Because most of the respondents were over age 69, it was not surprising that the majority (60 percent) of the female respondents lived alone. In comparison, 52 percent of the male respondents lived with their spouse. Table 19 identifies the respondents' current living situations by age; Table 20 contains this information by gender.

**Table 16**  
**Respondents' Age by Gender**

	<b>Gender</b>		
<b>Age Range</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Under 60	41 (5.4%)	118 (5.3%)	159 (5.3%)
60 – 69	190 (25.1%)	492 (22.1%)	682 (22.9%)
70 – 79	315 (41.7%)	884 (39.8%)	1199 (40.3%)
80 – 89	184 (24.3%)	624 (28.1%)	808 (27.1%)
90 or older	26 (3.4%)	104 (4.7%)	130 (4.4%)
<b>Total:</b>	756 (100.0%)	2222 (100.0%)	2978 (100.0%)

**Table 17**  
**Respondents' Age by Race**

	<b>Race</b>				
<b>Age Range</b>	<b>African American/ Black</b>	<b>Caucasian/ White</b>	<b>Native American</b>	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Total</b>
Under 60	30 (3.7%)	126 (6.7%)	5 (1.8%)	2 (2.3%)	163 (5.4%)
60 – 69	200 (24.6%)	438 (23.4%)	44 (16.2%)	15 (17.0%)	697 (22.9%)
70 – 79	337 (41.5%)	747 (39.9%)	103 (37.9%)	36 (40.9%)	1223 (40.2%)
80 – 89	195 (24.0%)	494 (26.4%)	107 (39.3%)	30 (34.1%)	826 (27.1%)
90 or older	50 (6.2%)	69 (3.7%)	13 (4.8%)	5 (5.7%)	137 (4.5%)
<b>Total:</b>	812 (100.0%)	1874 (100.0%)	272 (100.0%)	88 (100.0%)	3046 (100.0%)

Table 18

**Respondents' Age by Monthly Household Income**

Age Range	Monthly Household Income					No Response	Total
	Less than \$776	\$776 - \$1,163	\$1,164 - \$1,551	More than \$1,551			
Under 60	30 (3.8%)	19 (2.8%)	16 (5.2%)	69 (14.7%)		24 (4.5%)	158 (5.7%)
60 – 69	157 (20.1%)	139 (20.6%)	74 (24.3%)	146 (31.2%)		132 (24.6%)	648 (23.4%)
70 – 79	298 (38.1%)	292 (43.3%)	135 (44.3%)	167 (35.7%)		214 (39.9%)	1106 (40.0%)
80 – 89	238 (30.4%)	198 (29.3%)	72 (23.6%)	76 (16.2%)		142 (26.5%)	726 (26.2%)
90 or older	59 (7.5%)	27 (4.0%)	8 (2.6%)	10 (2.1%)		24 (4.5%)	128 (4.6%)
<b>Total:</b>	782 (100.0%)	675 (100.0%)	305 (100.0%)	468 (100.0%)		536 (100.0%)	2766 (100.0%)

Table 19

## Respondents' Current Living Situations by Age

Current Living Situation	< 60	60-69	70-79	80-89	90+	Total
Live alone	49 (28.5%)	299 (42.0%)	690 (56.8%)	528 (64.4%)	106 (79.7%)	1672 (54.8%)
Live with spouse	90 (52.3%)	309 (43.4%)	374 (30.8%)	160 (19.5%)	10 (7.5%)	943 (30.9%)
Live with child	20 (11.6%)	50 (7.0%)	85 (7.0%)	85 (10.4%)	13 (9.8%)	253 (8.3%)
Live with grandchild or other relative	9 (5.2%)	43 (6.0%)	58 (4.8%)	39 (4.8%)	3 (2.3%)	152 (5.0%)
Live with friend	4 (2.3%)	11 (1.5%)	7 (0.6%)	8 (1.0%)	1 (0.8%)	31 (1.0%)
<b>Total:</b>	172 (100.0%)	712 (100.0%)	1214 (100.0%)	820 (100.0%)	133 (100.0%)	3051 (100.0%)

**Table 20**  
**Respondents' Current Living Situations by Gender**

<b>Current Living Situation</b>	<b>Gender</b>		<b>Total</b>
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	
Live alone	296 (38.5%)	1405 (60.4%)	1701 (55.0%)
Live with spouse	404 (52.5%)	541 (23.3%)	945 (30.5%)
Live with child	23 (3.0%)	238 (10.2%)	261 (8.4%)
Live with grandchild or other relative	38 (4.9%)	117 (5.0%)	155 (5.0%)
Live with friend	8 (1.0%)	24 (1.0%)	32 (1.0%)
<b>Total:</b>	769 (100.0%)	2325 (100.0%)	3094 (100.0%)

#### **IV. Summary and Conclusions**

Based on the information we received, the vast majority of the respondents were female, ages 70-79, and White. Although we hoped to receive more surveys from persons under age 60, we were very pleased with the total number of completed surveys sent to us. For the most part, the respondents answered most of the survey questions. Their replies gave us a better understanding of the social and health services needs of Alabamians, particularly of the senior population.

Alabama's Aging Network advocates for over 800,000 older persons in the state. Along with hundreds of service providers, ADSS and the 13 AAAs provide information to older persons and their family members as they identify their needs and search for programs which may be available in their communities. Through *ElderConnect Alabama*, our statewide information and referral system, and the pro-active outreach efforts of dedicated professionals, the general public is

becoming better informed about programs and services available to seniors and family caregivers across the state.

ADSS and the AAAs will continue to analyze the results of this year's needs assessment in our program planning efforts. We will conduct more frequent needs assessments in the future and will focus each survey on a specific topic. We often search the U.S. Census Bureau's web site for current demographic information, both for internal planning purposes and to respond to requests from the general public. The Appendix contains Census 2000 information by AAA for various age groups. By compiling up-to-date demographic information and conducting more focused research, we will continue to better understand the needs of older Alabamians. As a result, we will more effectively develop programs and services to meet these needs.

## Appendix

## 2005 Needs Assessment for Senior Citizens' Services

We greatly appreciate your participation in our survey. Your responses will be kept completely confidential and anonymous. This questionnaire can also be found at [www.AGELINE.net](http://www.AGELINE.net). Please encourage others to participate in this very important process. If you have any questions, please call the Alabama Department of Senior Services at 1-877-425-2243.

1. Please tell us which of the following services are very important, somewhat important, or not very important to you, or could be concerns to you in the next five years.

Place an X in the box that best describes how important each service is to you personally.

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important
Availability of adult day care services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community activities for seniors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disease prevention information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Full-time employment for seniors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of hospital care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of in-home care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Free legal assistance for seniors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of mental health care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of nursing home care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Part-time work for seniors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of physical therapy at home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost of food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost of hospital care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost of in-home care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost of medicine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost of nursing home care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost of transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help with completing tax forms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help with filling out medical paperwork	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help with paying medical bills and/or medications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help with paying bills and/or managing household finances	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help with retirement planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Place an X in the box that best describes how important each service is to you personally.

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important
Help with taking care of older relatives or friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help with understanding benefits (like Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health insurance information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help with financial planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help with housework/cleaning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help with house/yard work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information about what services are available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legislative voice for seniors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintaining mental wellness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintaining my personal independence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintaining a healthy diet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Preventing identity theft and other frauds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Variety of health care choices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. How do you find out about programs and services for older adults in your area?

(Check all that apply.)

- |  |                                   |                                     |                                 |
|--|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone Directory | <input type="checkbox"/> Relative | <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper  | <input type="checkbox"/> Church |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doctor              | <input type="checkbox"/> Friend   | <input type="checkbox"/> Television | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio  |

☐ Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Are you able to drive when you need or want to?

- ☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Don't know/ Refuse to answer

4. Do you regularly provide care for someone who is not able to take care of him or herself?

- ☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Don't know/ Refuse to answer

5. In the last 12 months, have you had to delay or do without ...

- |                                  |                              |                             |   |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Prescription medications _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know/ Refuse to answer |
| Hearing aid _____                | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know/ Refuse to answer |
| Dental care _____                | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know/ Refuse to answer |
| New eyeglasses or eye care _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know/ Refuse to answer |

Other \_\_\_\_\_

6. **Would you be interested in volunteering to help senior citizens in your community?**  
☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Don't know/ Refuse to answer
7. **Are you currently working?**    ☐ Yes, Full Time      ☐ Yes, Part Time      ☐ No
8. **Do you have any of the following problems with your home?** (Check all that apply.)  
☐ Major repairs are needed  
☐ It is no longer affordable (utilities, upkeep, rent too expensive, etc.)  
☐ Pests (roaches, rats, etc.)  
☐ Landlord does not respond to my needs  
☐ My house is too large for my needs  
☐ My house has stairs that are difficult for me to use  
☐ Flooding or other similar environmental problems  
☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Don't know/ Refuse to answer
9. **Have you gotten a Medicare-approved Prescription Drug Discount Card?**  
☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Don't know/ Refuse to answer
10. **Did you qualify for the \$600 credit to help you with prescription drug costs?**  
☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Don't know/ Refuse to answer
11. **Have you ever been to a senior center in your community?**  
☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Don't know/ Refuse to answer
12. **Would you like to participate in a support group in your community?**  
☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Don't know/ Refuse to answer
13. **Are you familiar with the Alabama Department of Senior Services?**  
☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Don't know/ Refuse to answer
14. **Are you familiar with your Area Agency on Aging?**  
☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Don't know/ Refuse to answer
15. **Are there any other issues you would like us to consider or know about?**
- 
-

Now, below are just a few questions to help us know about you. Again, any information is strictly confidential and is greatly appreciated because it will help us make sure we are providing the services you need.

16. In what year were you born? \_\_\_\_\_

17. What is your gender? ☐ Male ☐ Female

18. What is your race?

☐ African American/Black  
☐ Native American

☐ Asian  
☐ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

☐ Caucasian/White  
☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

19. What is your ethnic background? ☐ Hispanic ☐ Not Hispanic

20. What is your current living situation? (Check all that apply.)

- ☐ Live alone
- ☐ Live with spouse
- ☐ Live with child
- ☐ Live with grandchild or other relative
- ☐ Live with friend
- ☐ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Don't know/ Refuse to answer

21. How far do you live from your nearest relative who does not live with you?  
(Please choose only one response.)

- ☐ Within 30 minutes
- ☐ More than 30 minutes, but less than 1 hour
- ☐ 1 or 2 hours away
- ☐ More than 2 hours away
- ☐ Out of state
- ☐ Relatives live with me
- ☐ Not applicable/ Don't know/ Refuse to answer

22. In which county do you live: \_\_\_\_\_

23. What is your household monthly income?

☐ Less than \$776 ☐ \$776 - \$1,163 ☐ \$1,164 - \$1,551 ☐ More than \$1,551 ☐ Don't know/ Refuse to answer

24. Did you vote in the last election?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know/ Refuse to answer

---

Thank you very much. Your input will make a real difference in the lives of older Alabamians.

PLEASE RETURN THIS BEFORE APRIL 15, 2005 -- TO:

2005 Needs Assessment  
Alabama Department of Senior Services  
P. O. Box 301851  
Montgomery, AL 36130-1851  
Fax: (334) 242-5594

If you have any questions, please feel free to call Ms. Tina Hartley at 1-877-425-2243.



## GET TO KNOW YOUR AREA AGENCY ON AGING

### ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF SENIOR SERVICES

Mrs. Irene B. Collins, Executive Director  
770 Washington Avenue, Suite 470, P. O. Box 301851  
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-1851  
334-242-5743/877-425-2243/FAX 334-242-5594  
Email: [ageline@adss.state.al.us](mailto:ageline@adss.state.al.us) Website: <http://www.ageline.net>

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS AND AREA AGENCY ON AGING (AAA) DIRECTORS

1. Mr. Keith Jones, Executive Director  
Mr. James Coman, AAA Director  
NW AL Council of Local Governments (NACOLG)  
103 Student Drive, Muscle Shoals, AL 35662  
256-389-0500/800-838-5845/FAX 256-389-0599  
Counties: Colbert, Franklin, Lauderdale,  
Marion, Winston
2. Mr. Bob Lake, Executive Director  
Ms. Pam McDaniel, AAA Director  
West Alabama Regional Commission (WARC)  
4200 Highway 69 North, Suite 1,  
Northport, AL 35476  
205-333-2990/800-432-5030/FAX 205-333-2713  
Counties: Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar,  
Pickens, Tuscaloosa
3. Ms. Julie O. Miller, Executive Director  
Middle Alabama Area Agency on Aging (M4A)  
110 North Main Street, Columbiana, AL 35051  
205-670-5770/866-570-2998/FAX 205-670-5750  
Counties: Blount, Chilton, Shelby,  
St. Clair, Walker
- 3A. Mr. William Voigt, Executive Director  
Office of Senior Citizens Services (OSCS)  
2601 Highland Avenue, Birmingham, AL 35205  
205-325-1416/NO 800/FAX 205-325-5617  
Counties: Jefferson
4. Mr. J. William Curtis, Executive Director  
Mr. Randy Frost, AAA Director  
East AL Reg Planning and Development Comm. (EARPDC)  
1130 Quintard Avenue, Suite 300,  
Anniston, AL 36202  
256-237-6741/800-239-6741/FAX 256-237-6763  
Counties: Calhoun, Chambers, Cherokee,  
Clay, Cleburne, Coosa, Etowah, Randolph,  
Talladega, Tallapoosa
5. Mr. Tyson Howard, Executive Director  
Ms. Sylvia Allen-Bowers, AAA Director  
South Central AL Development Commission (SCADC)  
5900 Carmichael Place, Montgomery, AL 36117  
334-244-6903/NO 800/FAX 334-270-0038  
Counties: Bullock, Butler, Crenshaw, Lowndes,  
Macon, Pike
6. Mr. John Clyde Riggs, Executive Director  
Ms. Merolyn Newsom, AAA Director  
Alabama Tombigbee Regional Commission (ATRC)  
107 Broad Street, Camden, AL 36726  
334-682-4234/888-617-0500/FAX 334-682-4205  
Counties: Choctaw, Clarke, Conecuh,  
Dallas, Marengo, Monroe, Perry, Sumter,  
Washington, Wilcox
7. Mr. Robert Crowder, Executive Director  
Southern AL Regional Council on Aging (SARCOA)  
230 North Oates Street, Dothan, AL 36302  
334-793-6843/800-239-3507/FAX 334-671-3651  
Counties: Barbour, Coffee, Covington,  
Dale, Geneva, Henry, Houston
8. Mr. Russell Wimberly, Executive Director  
Ms. Julie McGee, AAA Director  
South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC)  
110 Beauregard Street, Mobile, AL 36602  
251-433-6541/NO 800/FAX 251-433-6009  
Counties: Baldwin, Escambia, Mobile
9. Ms. Gayle Boswell, Executive Director  
Central Alabama Aging Consortium (CAAC)  
818 South Perry Street, Suite 1,  
Montgomery, AL 36104  
334-240-4666/800-264-4680/FAX 334-240-4681  
Counties: Autauga, Elmore, Montgomery
10. Ms. Suzanne Burnette, Executive Director  
Ms. Jackie D. Smith-Pinkard, AAA Director  
Lee-Russell Council of Governments (LRCOG)  
2207 Gateway Drive, Opelika, AL 36801-6834  
334-749-5264/800-239-4444/FAX 334-749-6582  
Counties: Lee, Russell
11. Mr. C. Ronald Matthews, Executive Director  
Mr. Rodney Gann, AAA Director  
North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments (NARCOG)  
216 Jackson Street, Decatur, AL 35602  
256-355-4515/NO 800/FAX 256-351-1380  
Counties: Cullman, Lawrence, Morgan
12. Mr. Robert B. Culver, Executive Director  
Ms. Nancy Robertson, AAA Director  
Top of AL Regional Council of Governments (TARCOG)  
5075 Research Drive NW, Huntsville, AL 35805  
256-830-0818/NO 800/FAX 256-830-0843  
Counties: DeKalb, Jackson, Limestone,  
Madison, Marshall

Updated: July 2005

<b>Alabama's Population by PSA and Age Group (Census 2000)</b>							
<b>PSA</b>	<b>Under 50</b>	<b>50 - 59</b>	<b>60 - 69</b>	<b>70 - 79</b>	<b>80 - 89</b>	<b>90+</b>	<b>Total</b>
NACOLG	155,202	28,621	21,588	16,036	7,417	1,366	230,230
WARC	195,322	28,689	20,186	15,476	7,036	1,499	268,208
M4A	266,418	45,268	29,011	19,353	7,914	1,401	369,365
OSCS	474,222	72,203	48,677	42,743	20,000	4,202	662,047
EARPDC	313,121	56,762	41,790	31,875	14,858	2,628	461,034
SCADC	80,494	12,518	9,098	7,190	3,887	774	113,961
ATRC	147,108	23,265	17,605	13,058	6,463	1,546	209,045
SARCOA	200,599	34,738	25,236	18,879	9,070	1,752	290,274
SARPC	412,946	66,163	46,342	35,274	15,291	2,682	578,698
CAAC	246,891	35,751	23,711	17,096	8,021	1,585	333,055
LRCOG	127,490	15,862	10,590	7,169	3,152	585	164,848
NARCOG	156,728	27,225	18,920	13,418	6,047	1,012	223,350
TARCOG	390,193	63,421	45,296	29,321	12,597	2,157	542,985
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>3,166,734</b>	<b>510,486</b>	<b>358,050</b>	<b>266,888</b>	<b>121,753</b>	<b>23,189</b>	<b>4,447,100</b>